

Sage Health Solutions Grows from Start-Up to Huge Success

Nelson Mandela once said:

Perhaps the most important inheritance of our new democratic South Africa has been the rebirth of the dignity of the individual – for without dignity, freedom has a bland taste.



For two sisters in Cape Town this message deeply resonated. After living through the iniquitousness of the [Apartheid](#) state in their country, in 2000, the women launched a start-up company, [Sage Health Solutions](#). They built their business on the belief that hospice workers champion the right to dignity for the terminally ill, that people are infinitely precious, and that even at the end of their lives, the elderly matter most.

To maintain the dignity and comfort of bedridden and terminally-ill hospital and healthcare facility patients, Sage Health Solutions provides products including specially made PVC-covered mattresses and pillows. The company manufactures, sells, and distributes a broad range of medical and remedial equipment and supplies to both public and private sector customers. But originally, Sage was only able to respond to requests for quotes (RFQs) manually, a time-consuming and labor-intensive method of conducting business. With such a complex and archaic system in place, Sage couldn't possibly grow globally or drive increased innovation.

However, in 2010, to do business electronically with the South African government, Sage Health Solutions joined the Ariba Network, and from there business boomed. Sage quickly began to experience the benefits of **simplified and streamlined procurement via the network**.

Using the Ariba Discovery service as a lead generation tool, Sage opened doors to new business opportunities with hospitals and private sector organizations both locally and globally. Ariba Discovery provides insight into over 730,000 sellers in 20,000 categories and 190 countries. 36% of sellers have a global reach and over 30,000 carry green or diversity certificates. With this service, Sage Health Solutions now has a competitive advantage over the market. Sage has insight into the best prices and can benchmark and negotiate electronically through the network, ensuring that it can offer customers the best price and product.

Sage is also using Ariba Discovery to be matched with buyers looking for their products. Ariba automatically sends Sage Health Solutions high quality leads, making its bidding process more efficient and accelerating the sales cycle. Most importantly, being a part of the Ariba Network means that Sage is boosting awareness among its target customers – and the numbers speak for themselves. During its first five



years on the Ariba Network, Sage Health Solutions grew from a modest idea to a multimillion-dollar business. Today, 80% of Sage's business comes from Ariba's automated platform.

With greater reach and increased innovation, Sage is providing more patients with more products for proper hygiene, protection, and freshness. One customer, Brenda Scholz, explained how Sage Health products helped her mother in her last days with their family. "On behalf of myself and my family we wish to convey our sincere gratitude for the purchase, and the good price of the bed, and other items for my mother. This has enabled us to make our task easier and lighter, and made my mother's last days with us as comfortable as possible."

Similarly, customer Nazlie Dalwai explained that, "Without Sage Enterprises, we could not have cared for my mother-in-law quite as well as we did."

The two women behind Sage Health Solutions are inspiring. With the help of the Ariba Network, the founders of Sage grew their small start-up from a dream to help preserve the dignity of the sick and elderly to a multimillion-dollar business reaching customers all over the world. As Nelson Mandela also said, "It always seems impossible until it's done." For the two women behind Sage Health Solutions, they've turned a dream into reality.

For more information on Sage Health Solutions and its engagement with Ariba, an SAP company, check out this [business transformation slide](#).